UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/53/568
S/1998/1025
2 November 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fifty-third session
Agenda items 39, 40 and 84
QUESTION OF PALESTINE
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
REPORT OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO
INVESTIGATE ISRAELI PRACTICES
AFFECTING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE
PALESTINIAN PEOPLE AND OTHER ARABS
OF THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-third year

Letter dated 2 November 1998 from the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In reference to the letter dated 30 October 1998 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations (A/53/560-S/1998/1019), the Palestinian side would like to bring the following to your attention.

Palestinian officials had, at an early stage, unequivocally condemned the criminal attempt to bomb an Israeli bus in Gaza on 29 October 1998. The Palestinian side also reaffirmed its commitment to implementing all the provisions of the Wye River Memorandum. We are, however, disappointed by the inaccurate way some of those commitments were presented in the above-mentioned letter. We reaffirm our rejection of violence by any party. At this time, we also reiterate the established positions of the international community that settlements are illegal and that the presence of Israeli settlers in the occupied territory since 1967 is clearly illegal under international law, the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and numerous relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions.

It is very disturbing that the Israeli side has already begun on this front to violate not only international law but the bilateral agreements as well. On Sunday, 1 November 1998, in Ras al-Amud, Occupied East Jerusalem, Jewish settlers, with the Government's permission, resumed work at a planned Jewish settlement in the heart of the Arab sector of the city. Also yesterday, Israel announced the building of 200 housing units on the edge of a Jewish settlement called "Kiryat Arba" in Al-Khalil (Hebron). There has also been news about a 50 per cent increase in the 1999 proposed Israeli budget in allocations for

illegal settlement activities. All of the above indeed represent a very inauspicious and dangerous beginning by the Israeli Government following the signing of the Wye River Memorandum.

It is our hope that all violations will be brought to an end and that both sides will proceed with the implementation of the Wye River Memorandum towards the implementation of the existing agreements as a whole.

I would be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 39, 40 and 84, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dr. Nasser AL-KIDWA
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations